

AT&T should not be allowed to purchase T-Mobile.

You may hear arguments concerning the free market and how the FCC should stay out of any business's actions. I'm here to offer the opposite argument.

There is very little free market in the wireless industry. Of course I can pick another carrier and go with them, but unlike wireline ISPs I cannot take my equipment with me. Imagine if you wanted to switch between Time Warner and Comcast but had to buy a new TV, Computer, and Wireless Router in order to do so. What if a town made an exclusive deal with Ford and only Ford made cars could drive on the city's roads?

That is the state of the wireless telecom industry today. And the only nationwide carriers in which you have an option to trade equipment on (albeit without wireless broadband) are AT&T and T-Mobile. If these two companies were to join there would be just ONE choice for a nationwide GSM based telecom. All foreign visitors traveling could only use AT&T with their equipment and AT&T would have a large bargaining chip to use in getting exclusive handset deals.

I don't know if it's too late to suggest, it might be, but what should have been done from the very beginning was operate the wireless spectrum like the roads. If companies owned roads, you'd see roads where only Chevies were allowed, only Hondas, only Fords, etc. due to exclusivity agreements. If the government maintained the towers and spectrum, then AT&T, Sprint, Verizon, and T-Mobile would all have the same coverage and their phones would work on all 4 networks. Then you'd see them compete on price and feature set.

If AT&T got T-Mobile, we'll be seeing a competition between them and VZW as to whom could charge their customers more for mediocre service.

My fiancée and I pay ~\$120 per month for 2 lines. Currently the the closest equivalent plan with less data and fewer minutes on AT&T is ~\$30 more. Not to say that my plan would be taken from me, I'm sure AT&T outlined that existing customers would be able to keep their plans. How long do you think that'll last though? And new customers surely would not have the option that we have today to pay less money for more services. As soon as AT&T finishes their LTE network they could theoretically say if you want to use data on their new network then you have to pick a new plan - even for folks who don't buy AT&T phones. iPhone owners know this well, if you buy a used iPhone on craigslist and pop your sim card in your phone, next bill you'll be surprised that AT&T signed you up for an iPhone plan without telling you or having you agree to anything.

That's the kind of corporate trickery you'll be allowing to happen. And of course I'll still have the option of switching to Verizon and Sprint, right? Well the only option if I want to import a phone or if I were a foreigner traveling in the US would be AT&T. That's a monopoly, a GSM monopoly.